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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KAMPALA 001159

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SUBJECT: UGANDA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS TEMPLATE

REF: STATE 88842

Classified By: P/E Chief Kathleen FitzGibbon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).).

¶1. (C) Summary: Ugandan military and civilian officials view the U.S.-facilitated Tripartite Plus process as important for confidence-building between the parties and for keeping pressure up on neighbors to rein in negative forces. Ugandans argue that the process has resulted in behind-the-scenes progress on the negative forces, even if not apparent to the U.S. We do not believe it is time to bring the Tripartite Plus process to a close. However, it could be time to consider how the Tripartite Plus process could be continued without U.S. facilitation under the rubric of the Great Lakes Security Pact. End Summary.

¶2. (C) The Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence Leopold Kyanda, Commander of Uganda's Land Forces Lt. General Katumba Wamala, the Deputy Director of the External Security Organization (ESO) Robert Masolo, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Director for East African and the Ring States Julius Kagamba Singomba all told emboffs that the Tripartite Plus process continues to build confidence among the parties. They believe that regular meetings are a useful, neutral forum for airing political differences, even if they are not resolved publicly at the meetings. Military officers report that the Chief of Defense Forces' meetings and smaller bilateral meetings on border security are building a foundation and expectation of cooperation that had been lacking in the past.

¶3. (C) Tripartite Plus keeps up the pressure on the parties to take action on issues, even if it is behind-the-scenes, according to Kagamba. He told P/E Chief that even though it appears that there is a disagreement or stalemate at the table over the issue of the Peoples' Redemption Army (PRA), the Rwandan Government has been making moves against many of the people on the Ugandan list. The Ugandan Government is pleased with some of the actions, but does not want to make those actions public at the table because of the sources of the information. Kagamba said that Uganda believes that Rwanda is trying to disengage itself from the PRA. Moreover, one result of the Tripartite Plus process is that Congo must pay constant attention to the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) even if it lacks the capacity to take action against them. While the lack of action might be misinterpreted, the presence of the LRA on the regional agenda limits any type of support the Congolese might consider giving them. Congo is more uncomfortable with the LRA than it was before, according to Kagamba.

¶4. (C) Uganda continues to push for a regularization of its relationship with Congo bilaterally as well as through the Tripartite Plus forum. Foreign Minister Kutesa raised the issue of agreement for the Ugandan Ambassador in Kinshasa with his Congolese counterpart at the African Union Summit in Accra. The Congolese Foreign Minister told Kutesa that

Uganda needs to address the issue of the 10 Billion dollar judgment against it by the International Court of Justice first. Nonetheless, Ugandan ministers travel to Kinshasa to address important issues as needed. The Ugandans are pressing for a reinstatement the Joint Permanent Commission to handle border issues, refugees, joint exploitation of natural resources, trade, tourism, and illegal arms flows. Regular meetings between Ugandan and Congolese military officials also occur.

¶ 15. (C) On the Fusion Cell, our military and intelligence interlocutors argued that a virtual cell might work better than the center in Kisangani. Kyanda and Kagamba expressed concern over the cost of maintaining a person at Kisangani. Quarterly meetings of the focal points might accomplish the objectives of the Fusion Cell with less costs. The Ugandans also expressed appreciation for the visits of Colonel Orth and Africa Bureau Deputy Assistant James Swan in between Tripartite Plus meetings to informally keep things moving between formal gatherings.

¶ 16. (C) Kagamba stated that the criminalization of harboring negative forces in each of the Great Lakes Security Pact countries is one way to resolve the issue of illegal arms flows. He argued that prosicution of arms suppliers by host countries could contribute to deterring illegal arms deliveries. He also asked if the U.S. can donate old radar systems to monitor the 17 airstrips in Congo that MONUC has identified as possible transit points for illegal weapons. This type of verification could deter arms traffickers.

¶ 17. (C) Uganda will raise (at the next meeting) the issue of adding Kenya and Tanzania as Tripartite Plus observers. They are already part of the Great Lakes Security Pact troika.

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Kagamba also requested an invitation for the Great Lakes Executive Secretary Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, based at the Secretariat Headquarters in Bujumbura.

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COMMENT: LOOKING AHEAD  
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¶ 18. (C) From our perspective, it is not yet time to bring the Tripartite Plus process to a close. The Ugandans have pointed out a number of positive behind-the-scenes developments that indicate that some of the difficult issues are being addressed, even if these do not manifest themselves in the deliverable form that we prefer. Nevertheless, considering how to transition the Tripartite Plus into the Great Lakes Security Pact process could begin by bringing in key players as observers to begin preparing the groundwork for an eventual and clean hand-off. At the next Tripartite Plus meeting, discussion of a hand-over could begin and the parties asked to decide on what they want to achieve prior to a hand-over. We also suggest not adding new issues that can be handled bilaterally and sticking to the three existing areas of restoring diplomatic relations, addressing negative forces, and negotiating extradition treaties. These deliverables create the framework for dealing with other issues. Illegal arms, for example, are a symptom, not a root cause or mechanism for resolving poor relations between the parties. We also recommend that the relevant Political Officers and Defense Attache personnel from the U.S. Missions in the Tripartite Plus countries be invited to each Tripartite Plus meeting. This will help posts better understand the issues and relationships, improve follow up, interpret events and analyze progress on the ground, and provide U.S. support when the U.S.-facilitation phase of the process does come to a close.

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